SELF-SUPPORT OF ABLE-BODIED PAUPERS.—The mitigation of the burden of supporting the unemployed poor by obliging them, as far as possible, to provide for themselves both food and raiment, in place of idly wasting an immense force of muscle and sinew throughout the country, while the employed, the industrious, and the well-doing are made to support that force in idleness, is a subject which common sense seems at length to be forcing on the attention of the ratepayers throughout the country, in spite of all the fine-spun arguments against it, mainly based on the dread of socialistic results,—as if labour and self-support, in the place of idle dependance on others, were likely, when added, as a test, to the degradation of pauperism, to induce the industrious, and self-respecting, self-dependant artisan, to turn pauperism into Socialism! And even although Socialism were identified with pauperism, what worse mischief to Socialism could we wish than that it should be subject to such a degradation, and be hence despised by every self-respecting workman? The reproductive employment of pauper labour, which we have long advocated, is now engaging the attention of the clergy and others, of all religious denominations, at Manchester, where steps are being taken to induce such a change in the poor-law or its administration as to employ paupers on remunerative labour. The Rev. T. R. Bentley, M.A. incumbent of St. Matthew's, Manchester, at a meeting lately held for the purpose of adopting petitions to Parliament and the Poor-law Board, observed that he had consulted the earliest statutes that had been passed for the relief of the poor, and without going further back than the 43rd of Elizabeth, he had found that they all contained provisions for setting the able-bodied to work, in lieu of the assistance afforded to them. He did not find any mention of "reproductive" work, but this omission could be accounted for by the presumption that our ancestors never contemplated anything else than profitable labour, and hence there was no necessity for particularly specifying its quality. The statute in question expressly stated that the officers entrusted with its administration should provide flax, hemp, and other stuff, with which to set the people to work. The Poor-Law Amendment Act, which was passed in 1834, did not repeal the 43rd of Elizabeth, but merely changed the officers. Therefore, to all intents and purposes, the principle of the statutes for the relief of the poor was not foreign to the introduction and prosecution of remunerative "pauper" labour. It is to be hoped, then, that a compulsory return will speedily be made to the spirit of our old poor-law, which thus appears to be quite consistent with the letter of the new, as well as with its spirit and intention.

THE ENGINEERING DISPUTE.—Two of the "amalgamated engineers" were brought up last week at the Lambeth Police Court on a charge of intimidation, brought by an engineer's labourer in the employment of Messrs. Maudslay and Field. After evidence had been taken, Mr. Norton, the magistrate, said it was clear that the evidence of the complainant did not bring the case within the terms of the Combination Act, and he was inclined to think that they had in a great measure provoked the treatment they had experienced, by reason of their having called after the defendants, and acted offensively towards them, after having parted peaceably. He should not, therefore, send the case to the sessions, but impose a fine of 20s. each and the cost of the warrant, or, in default, to stand committed to prison for twenty-one days each. The fines were immediately paid, and the defendants at once discharged.

ARCHITECTURAL LECTURES.—Mr. Kerr is to lecture on architecture at the London Mechanics' Institution, on the 28th of April and the three Wednesdays following. The first lecture will treat of the general question; the second, of the history to the fall of the Roman empire; the third, of the history from that epoch to the present day; and the fourth and last, of the present principles of design and criticism practically.

ON "THE VALUE OF ENGINEERING ESTIMATES."—The *Liverpool Journal* of the 10th inst. contains an article on this subject, with special reference to the probable cost of the Rivington Pike Waterworks for Liverpool, and exemplified by the cases of the Birkenhead Docks, Grimsby Dock, Holyhead Harbour, &c. It is calculated that the real cost of the Rivington Pike scheme will be swollen into millions in place of some hundreds of thousands, as originally estimated. That the original estimates for the Birkenhead Docks are less than half what the actual cost of these docks will be. That the original estimate for the Great Grimsby Docks was 422,976*l.*; whereas 574,104*l.* have already been expended, and 200,000*l.* will be required to complete them; while, nevertheless, the promised dock comprises only 40 acres in place of 100. That the real cost of Holyhead harbour of refuge is more likely to be 2,000,000*l.* than 628,080*l.* the original estimate, and to take 10 years than 6. The responsibility of a good deal of these discrepancies is laid on the shoulders of Mr. Rendel, as engineer, and of Mr. R. Stephenson, as referee. "We are far from wishing," concludes the *Journal*, "to depreciate the benefit the country may derive from engineering skill and ability, often evinced in the successful completion of most difficult tasks; but we do say that estimates ought to tally more than they do with the actual cost, otherwise it is sheer nonsense to have any estimates at all; whilst to those who embark their money on the faith of engineering estimates the consequences are most disastrous. A sum of money is raised to complete a work that is expected to realise a certain amount of revenue. Before the work is half done the estimate is doubled; preference bond, or some such arrangement is required, and the original subscriber is left penniless. Well may contractors and engineers grow rich, whilst their constituents are their dupes. Nor can we imagine a system more dishonest or disgraceful than the one we are now commenting upon."

THE DUMFRIES NEW PRISON.—This edifice is now completed, and the principal portion occupied. The smaller and more recently built wing is still vacant. "It is unmistakeably ugly," says the *Dumfries Courier*, "and ought never to have been erected on its present site. From some points the edifice has rather an imposing effect; otherwise it is an eyesore and a blot on the appearance of the burgh. No one will blame the architect of the Dumfries Prison for giving it a seducing aspect to the criminally disposed portion of the population. The interior arrangements, however, have been skilfully planned, and well executed." The building runs along the south side of Buccleuch-street for about 150 feet, and the greater portion is 26 feet wide. It is divided into three parts, the eastern end being for female prisoners, the western for males, the one being about three times the size of the other, while the third part, which stands betwixt the other two, affords rooms for the occupation of officials and other purposes: this portion is about 10 feet broader than the wings on each side. The whole range of building is five stories in height. The only openings to the front are the doors, and the necessary absence of any windows in the great extent of the front wall is the principal cause of the heavy aspect of the building.

GLASGOW ARCHITECTURAL ASSOCIATION.—In the economy of this association the preparation and exhibition of competition designs forms one of the more prominent elements. Scarcely had the association been constituted, when premiums towards this purpose were offered by Mr. Wilson, Mr. Rochead, and Mr. Smith, local architects. The drawings for the subject proposed by Mr. Wilson—"The best design for a Presbyterian place of worship, *not* in the Gothic style," have been recently exhibited, and the judges on their merits, Messrs. Rhind, Wilson, and Rochead, have awarded the premium to Mr. John Thomson; and in consideration of superior merit adjudged a further premium to Mr. James Hamilton, draughtsman in the employment of Mr. Kirkland, Bothwell-street.

LECTURE ON GLASS MANUFACTURE.—One of the recent "Exhibition Lectures" of the Society of Arts, Adelphi, was on glass, by Professor George Shaw, of Queen's College, Birmingham. The lecturer, after describing the chemical components of the materials of glass, or the "silicates," pointed out how the various kinds of glass were produced by different mixtures of silicates. Thus, a mixture of silicate of alum and of potass, or soda, produced a glass which resisted the action of acids, but was fusible at a low temperature. The lecturer then described the processes of fusion, cleansing, annealing, &c. and proceeded to notice the different branches of the manufacture, and first, sheet glass. The glass used for glazing, he observed, was of two kinds, crown glass and spread glass—the method of producing each of which he explained, referring for illustration to the specimens sent to the Exhibition by Messrs. Chance, Mr. Hartley, Messrs. Swinburne, and others. In purity of colour and beauty of surface, he observed, the English manufacturers must yield the palm to those on the continent, though for all purposes of utility our glass was equally good. In speaking of the manufacture of flint glass, he referred to the specimens of prisms in the Exhibition, and explained the method of cutting, polishing, and engraving glass. There was great difficulty in producing large masses of crown glass of uniform texture, but Messrs. Chance had recently hit on a method whereby they were successful in furnishing glass of this quality sufficient to meet the demands of science. The common colours of glass were produced by metallic oxides. Sometimes the colour was made to permeate the whole body of the glass: at others, only the surface was coloured, thus enabling the workman to remove it in some parts and substitute other colours. In no branch of art had the Exhibition more fully answered its design than in the illustration it had afforded of the various means of producing painted windows. Owing to the fact that the surface of plain glass was only susceptible of two or three colours, the remainder could only be produced by means of enamel, which impaired the transparency. The Exhibition had done great service in demonstrating the utter hopelessness of ever producing real pictures in glass, if its transparency was to be maintained; but it had also shown that no material was better adapted for presenting the conventional forms of heraldry, or the easy designs in which consisted the symbols of mediæval art.

ST. ALBAN'S ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—A quarterly meeting of this society was held at the town hall, St. Alban's, on Wednesday week. In the absence of the president (Earl of Verulam), the Rev. Dr. Nicholson, the rector of St. Alban's, took the chair. The secretary reported an interchange of courtesies and publications with the Kilkenny Archæological Society, and the chairman presented a copy, in colours, of a fresco, recently discovered in the abbey, representing a mitred ecclesiastic. A *bulla* found near the abbey, and bearing the name of Pope John XXIII. was the subject of some discussion. Mr. Evans produced some Celtic antiquities, found in Herts; and read some remarks, also transmitted to the Society of Antiquaries, on the subject of the *bulla* above mentioned.—Mr. Shirley Brooks read a paper on the Literature of English Epitaphs. He reviewed the history of these inscriptions, and concluded by urging that an improvement in our present style of epitaph writing would only be effected by the subject being continually raised at meetings like that he addressed; and recommended members of archæological societies to take special note of any single instance of good or bad epitaph writing which came under their knowledge, and to make it the subject of public comment. The audience was graced by the presence of a large number of ladies.

STATUE OF NAPOLEON.—The large equestrian statue of the emperor Napoleon, modelled by M. de Nieuwerkerke for the city of Lyons, is to be cast in bronze at one operation, by MM. Eck and Durand. The pedestal of this statue is, for the present, placed in the courtyard of the Invalides.—*Galignani.*

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